

RMS INSTA-POLL

“How have you adjusted to the lessened availability of covers?”

[April –78 responding; representative responses below]

Buy more! - 20

- I got started too late and missed the heyday of collecting. I just get mine on ebay, club auctions and flea markets. And AMCAL
- I am doing less mail trading, but buying more at auctions and ebay.
- It has not been a problem for me with all the collections for sale.
- Rely more on buying old collections.

Not concerned! - 18

- More matchcovers are available now than ever. Internet communication and less collectors being just two of the major factors.
- Because I collect in a fairly narrow band I have not found any great change in the availability of covers.
- Actually, two of my biggest categories – casinos and New York city still have an abundance of new covers.
- Our Girlie club always presents newer & older covers for trades & to buy. We are never "lessened".
- At 89 years and with limited contact with collectors, whatever comes my way is a blessing.
- Since I only collect vintage items (full book midgets), it is not a factor.
- No adjustment necessary.....Tons of covers out there.....
- I have such a backlog I hardly notice.
- No change. Just less free covers.
- Hasn't happened to us!
- I have accepted it.

Rely more on hobby events! - 13

- I attend a number of swapfests so I have access to covers and boxes through them and I still have traders who are very good sources.
- Freebie tables!

Focusing on other phases of the hobby! - 12

- Spending more time on lists and articles
- I am spending much more time organizing my collection and much less time expanding it.
- The lessened availability is no problem. I have enough covers to sort and put in their proper place for at least the next 50 years.
- I'm focusing on categories not affected by shortage of new matches.
- Organizing will take me many more years.
- I go after older covers.

Get out more to look for covers! - 8

- I make more trips to Las Vegas, which is only 4 hours away.
- I actually go out to eat less and definitely go out for a drink less. Quite a few places have dropped off our "list" of places to go to. When we do go someplace to eat and it is quite nice but doesn't have matches, my wife says, "Guess we won't be coming back."
- There are tons of covers out there. They are not the new covers, but they are the old ones. Get your name out and about and go to some sales, estate, garage and ASK people.
- I'm finding new matches regularly. I still do crawls, but I crawl smart.

Greater reliance on trading! - 7

- trading more.

Miscellaneous! - 5

- I have stopped looking at businesses where I once made routine stops.
- I don't look for them anymore.
- I covet the ones from places I've been.
- I spend more time on my other hobbies
- A true phillumenist can never really, truly adjust to any diminution in the supply of available matchbooks. And for those of us who collect full books, it is all the more difficult

Downsized! - 4

- I have sold 80% of my collection due to the lessened availability of matchcovers.

Relying more on friends and relatives! - 3

- By inviting peoples at home and show my albums.
- I have reached out to friends to search their home for their odd collection of memorabilia.

Expanded want areas! - 2

- Choosing more categories
- I think enjoying multiple categories is a benefit

Lower standards! -1

- Not as picky of the condition of the matches.

Increased standards! - 1

- I am more selective.

Well, the fact that the biggest percentage of respondents indicated they were adjusting to the situation by buying more isn't much of a surprise. However, an almost equal percentage said that they basically were unconcerned about the change in availability of covers. On the face of it, that would be somewhat surprising, I admit, but people were unconcerned for different reasons. Some were specialty collectors whose category(ies) were unaffected by the industry change; some were simply so far behind in organizing what they already had [*sound familiar!*] that current circumstances were more or less meaningless to them; some have simply resigned themselves to it with no significant adjustments.

I also found my eyebrows raising a little at seeing a large percentage saying that they were relying more on obtaining covers from club meetings, swapfests, and conventions....because I haven't seen a corresponding significant increase in attendance at such meetings, at least not across the board. I'm looking at the attendance stats right now, and, comparing 2011 to 2009 for example....RMS attendance is the same, Southern Swapfest is down, and AMCAL and UES is up [*Of course, there are other possibilities...attendance could be going up but such increases could be offset by declining collector numbers in general*].

Only two collectors said they had expanded their want areas as an adjustment. That might be one to consider. Personally, I've found that I collect in so many categories that I can use, one way or another, most of what comes my way...and I increase what comes my way by trading, taking in accumulations, buying, etc. There *are* millions and millions of covers out there. You just have to make more of any effort these days to find them.